



# **Carol Ohmart**

**The Story of Hollywood's  
Greatest Actress**



**Samuel Clemens**





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Actress

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By Samuel Clemens



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*"Carol Ohmart is a star and anyone who refers to her as a starlet is fired immediately!" - Y Frank Freeman*





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# *Introduction*

When we think of Hollywood's greatest actresses, Betty Davis, Katherine Hepburn, Joan Crawford, Grace Kelly, and Veronica Lake are some of the names that come to mind. Carol Ohmart is proof that you can be virtually unknown by contemporary audiences, but you can still rank among the greatest. In fact, a lot of the successes of actresses in Hollywood isn't necessarily based on talent, but rather chance. She never got the opportunities to prove herself.

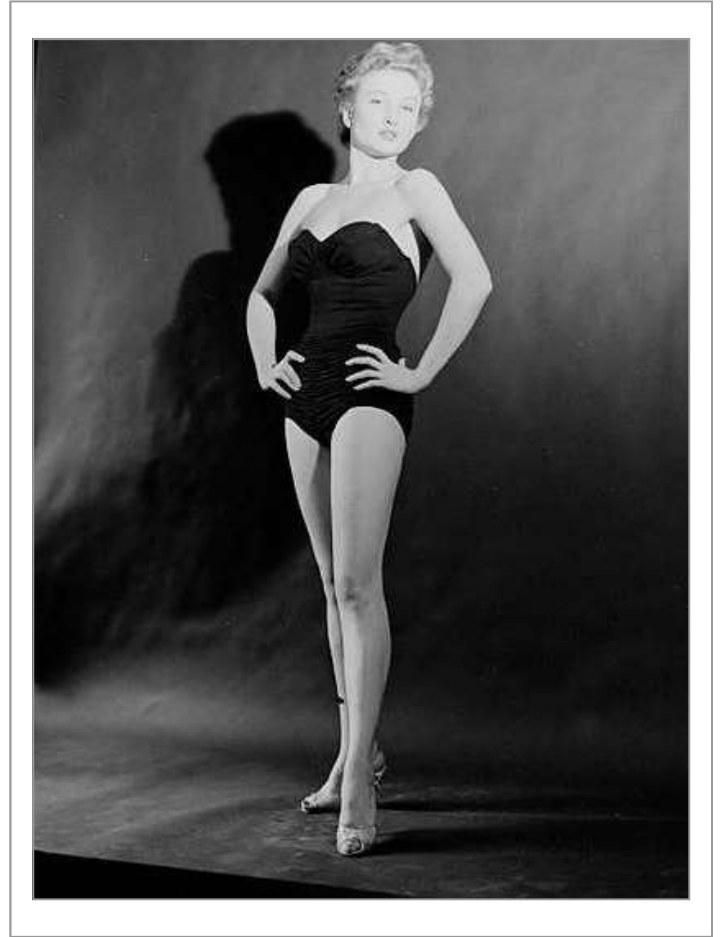
My fascination and admiration for Carol Ohmart began in 2008 after seeing *House on Haunted Hill* (1959), which was included in a DVD that I got as a gift. I had heard of Vincent Price, but Carol Ohmart was unfamiliar to me. She resembled Meryl Streep at some angles, and she was certainly just as good of an actress. After seeing the film, I typed her name on Google to see who she was and was delighted to see that she had a dedicated audience. I saw that she starred in ten wide-release films, nine of which were unfamiliar to me.



The most intriguing thing about Carol Ohmart aside from her talents as an actress was that that nobody knew her whereabouts. There were message boards of people trying to locate her, including one who said he'd spent years searching. I found an interview that author Gregg Barrios did with her that was dated January 1, 1989, but he had lost touch with her as well. That was the last anyone heard of her.

I saw several of her films that year. The mainstream ones like *Wild Party* (1956) and *Spider Baby* (1967) were easy to get ahold of, while *Caxambu!* (1967) and *The Spectre of Edgar Allen Poe* (1974) were rare and costly. Even though her most successful film was the aforementioned *House of Haunted Hill* (1959), I liked *The Scarlet Hour* (1956) the most. Ironically, it was the most difficult to find because it didn't have a VHS or DVD release until recently. After finishing high school, I lost hope in finding her. I eventually forgot about her until months before my undergraduate studies when I resumed my search which led -to my disappointment- me finding her death certificate. That was years ago.

I recently decided to commemorate her life and career in this biography after writing four books and publishing several articles in magazines. I realized that none of the actors and actresses I've written about were as talented as she was. Why has nobody written a book about her? It's because she's faded into obscurity. She was forgotten by the public. She never won any accolades, nor did she get any posthumous awards or honors. She deserves to be remembered, and that's why I wrote this book.



Thankfully, there was no shortage of information on Carol Ohmart. I discovered that she had a lot of dedicated fans who did their own research over the years, as well as co-stars and colleagues who have written about her with fond memories. I hope that people enjoy reading this book about Hollywood's greatest actress, whether it'd be fans of Carol Ohmart or just people who are interested in the films of a bygone era.



*Early Years*

Armelia Carol Ohmart's life began in Salt Lake City, Utah, where she was born on June 6, 1927 to Thomas Carlyle and Merle Ohmart. They were lapsed Mormons whose contentious marriage was an embarrassment to their extended family. Thomas was a wannabe actor and divorcee turned dentist who had studied at Western Dental College. He had a successful practice, but was plagued by financial woes. He eventually filed for bankruptcy in 1924. Merle was a wannabe model turned dietician turned secretary. She had studied at Saint Mary's Academy, but wanted the traditional lifestyle of a homemaker. They married on November 19, 1926 after Merle discovered she was pregnant. There was nothing more scandalous than a child being born out of wedlock.

As a toddler, her family relocated to San Francisco, California. She -at the urging of her uncle Owen Sweeten- did her first onstage performance at the age of 3 at the Orpheum Theater. She attended the Redding Grammar School where she excelled in her studies and demonstrated maturity and outspokenness that was normally seen in adults. She could've been an academic, but her parents had other plans for her.

Although a 'lapsed' Mormon, Merle used religion to her advantage by using it to teach Carol to be obedient and submissive to her mother in the most absurd ways. She was abusive, cruel, and manipulative. It didn't help that her father was distant and usually didn't live with his wife and daughter. It even prompted Carol to write a song about him called "Daddy is Somebody to Say Goodbye To." She was impressive for her age, but very troubled.

Although very social, Carol had difficulties building friendships because her family would move frequently. They left Utah for Seattle, Washington in the 1930s so her father could pursue dentistry. They purchased a house on 8322 15th Street Northwest. Their financial woes became unbearable as Thomas was an alcoholic and couldn't hold steady employment. They decided to move in with their cousins in Reno, Nevada where Carol had her first gig singing by joining the Reno Municipal Band. *God Bless America* and *Star Spangled Banner* were among the songs that she sang at events. She left quite an impression on her fellow performers. She briefly sang in The Serenaders and The Jan Garber Band as well.



Carol Ohmart and Merle - 1940s

She enrolled at Billingshurst Junior High School with her cousins, continuing her singing by joining the A-Capella Choir. She proved herself to be an academic by achieving Honor Roll. She later transferred to Northside Junior High School where she did journalism and creative writing. On May 16, 1941, they awarded her - and several others- an award in their publications category which was given to aspiring writers.



Carol Ohmart - 1940s

If she hadn't become an actress, she would've become a writer. It was at the age of 11 that she left class early and entered the office of the *Seattle Post-Examiner* and told the editor-in-chief that there wasn't enough material that children would wanna read. He was impressed and gave her a weekly column. It sounds like the theme of a sitcom, but it's exactly what happened. She was barely a teenager, yet she had accomplished more than most adults did.

It was September 1942 that Carol Ohmart enrolled at Bryant High School. She studied under the direction of Miss Billings. She had her first onstage starring role in *Bargains in Haircuts* with Harold Collipriest and Ralph Lubeck. Unfortunately, her understudy replaced her as she moved back to Utah and enrolled at East High School. This was a life-changing experience as she met Miss Lisle Bradford, the choir director who'd later become a mentor who elicited her love of music. She tirelessly helped Carol improve her voice, suggesting that she join the Church of Latter Day Saints' Choir where she became a soloist. When Carol got her first chance to sing on the radio, she credited Lisle as being her greatest influence in music. She sang at various radio stations including KSL, KUTA, and KDYL.

On November 19, 1941, Carol's parents entered the Salt Lake County Courthouse to request a divorce. Merle had enough of living in different states, and Thomas no longer found Merle attractive. It seldom affected Carol as she found the performing arts to be an escape. Apparently it was a slow week in the news, as the divorce and custody hearings between Carol Ohmart's parents Thomas and Merle made headlines in Utah. They were granted a divorce on January 27, 1942, where Carol got custody of their child and was awarded child support payments of \$15 a week. Merle was never the same afterwards, beginning a decades-long spiral into depression. She wasn't by any means attractive, so to be rejected by her husband was a letdown. Quoting her cousin, Claudia Atkinson, "She [Merle] didn't have beaus."

Carol Ohmart graduated from Lewis and Clark High School with honors in Spokane, Washington in June 1944. In lieu of high education, she embarked on a singing and modeling career while living with her mother. She would spend days staying with cousins due to butting heads with her. They understood completely, as Merle had a reputation for being irritable. That reputation would be evident years later when her relationship with her daughter would reach a crescendo.

# Miss America

Carol Ohmart was very ambitious. She wanted to be a star. She had already done modeling and gigs on the radio, but she yearned for Hollywood or Broadway. It wasn't until finishing her education that she realized why she wanted stardom. She wanted to leave the dependency that she had on her mother. Although she and her mother had engaged in conflict throughout her childhood, it grew worse since Carol wasn't preoccupied with schooling. Her vivid memories of Merle's tantrums and forcing her to scrub the floor hours before her prom began were inescapable, but she was determined to try.

The easiest way to become a star in Hollywood was by being crowned Miss America, Miss U.S.A, or Miss Universe. It guaranteed publicity, exposure, and a contract with a studio or network. After graduating, Carol was crowned Miss Salt Lake City, Miss Celery Queen, and Miss Flame Girl of the Ninth Service Command. She later competed in Miss Utah where she was named a finalist on September 7, 1944. It was the consensus of the judges that she was a bit too young. She was 17 years old and inexperienced by the standards of showbusiness, so she spent the year studying meeting people in the industry to boost her chances of victory. She reentered the following year and was crowned Miss Utah at the Utah State Fair that summer. This guaranteed her entry in Miss America, the pageant that had more notoriety and recognition than Hollywood itself.

She flew to Atlantic City, New Jersey on September 2, 1945. The pageant began the following day with an audience of over 1,000 people. She placed fourth to Marilyn Buferd on September 6, 1945 after singing "I Won't Tell a Soul" and was presented with honors by Governor Herbert B. Maw that included a scholarship and dramatic lessons. She began freelancing at venues like El Gaucho and The Coconut Grove along with sporadic modeling, realizing that there wasn't much more she could do in Utah. If she wanted to progress as an actress, she'd have to go somewhere with more opportunity.



She had her sights set on New York. One of the judges in the pageant, Russell Patterson, helped her achieve her dream. He and his wife, Ruth Cleary, took Carol under their wing. They saw that she had untapped potential. They put a down-payment on an apartment for her in Brooklyn so that she can fulfill her dreams of fame and fortune, giving her her first assignment as a model in their documentary film *Pin-Up Girl* by Russell Patterson. It was the first nationally-released film by Russell's new production company Fortuna Films Corp.

# *The Buildup*

It was two years after being a runner-up in Miss America that Carol and her mother left for New York, where she did commercials and radio. There were discussions of her starring in a television series on NBC that similar to *Hit Parade*, but nothing materialized. She was cast alongside Robert Mitchum in *New York Confidential* (1955), but neither actor would be in the finished product as delays would stall it for almost a decade. This series of unfortunate events would prove taxing on Carol, she remained optimistic. She said to the *Ogden-Standard Examiner* that, "The road to a successful career is a long, hard one. I think I am on my way." She was featured in *Popular Photography*, *Police Gazette*, and *Esquire* among other magazines. She posed for Milton Caniff, who sketched her. Those sketches were later used in *Steve Canyon*, a popular comic strip. She dyed her hair red at Milton's request.



Carol Ohmart and Milton Caniff at  
NBC Studios - 1947

As expected, she grew weary of living with her mother. She shared an apartment with Barbara Nichols, whom she met weeks prior while doing a commercial. Barbara would later achieve immense success in the industry. Merle didn't mind, as she was occupied with beautician schooling. She wanted to be a self-described "beautician to the stars". It was almost as glamorous as being a star. She did an apprenticeship at a nearby salon, where she boasted about her daughter's accomplishments.



Carol Ohmart and Ken Grayson  
- 1950

While singing on the radio, Carol met a disc jockey and veteran named Kenneth James Grossman, whom was employed at the same station using the stage name Ken Grayson. He was incredibly handsome and had similar ambitions of stardom. They married on April 17, 1949 at the Church of Latter Day Saints - he was also a lapsed Mormon - against the wishes of her mother, who felt that Carol would have children and leave showbusiness. The wedding was lavish with lilies, tulips, and roses decorating the church. Their marriage was brief, as they got it annulled two years later. Ken would later become a manager and agent for various d-list celebrities.

It was months after her doomed marriage that she got her first recurring role on television. She, Beverly Phillips, and Anne Francis -another actress who would achieve more onscreen success than Carol- were hired as models on the *Bonny Maid Variety Show*, also known as the *Versatile Varieties*. In addition to national exposure, it provided Carol with a steady source of income at \$75 a week. Beverly -who was a good friend of Carol's in Salt Lake City- was later replaced by Eva Marie Saint, another actress who would achieve more success than Carol by winning an Academy Award a few years later.



Carol Ohmart, Harold Barry, and Anne Francis on *Versatile Varieties* - 1950

Although the series didn't do a lot for Carol's career, she developed a lifelong friendship with Anne. In fact, Carol served as a witness and confidant at Anne's divorce hearing years later. They would remain close even as Carol became reclusive in her later years. Since Carol was no longer under contract, she left for Hollywood on August 19, 1951 to do screen tests. They weren't good though, and she flew back to New York where she did walk-on roles on *Studio One*, *The Philco Playhouse*, *Your Prize Story*, and the *Colgate Comedy Hour*. She even revived her journalism career by penning an article with *International News Service* titled Publicity Stunt Reveals New York Open to Attack. Ivan Tors signed her for a starring role in his film *Riders to the Stars* (1954), but he replaced her in lieu of someone with greater name recognition.

In 1952, Carol was hired as a spy for Mystery Writers of America, where -using her extraordinary acting ability- went incognito to find cases of espionage at airports by circulating to different waiting areas and bars. She would act seductive and flirt with men who seemed suspicious to see if they'd admit to being spies. She became very politically involved afterwards, registering as a Republican with the likes of Ronald Reagan, Jane Russell, and Ruta Lee. While at an RNC gathering, Carol met someone who would be a friend and mentor. He was also one of the most powerful men in Hollywood.

Harry Cohen was managing Columbia Pictures when he and Carol met. He had built the successful career of Rita Hayworth, but he was searching for someone to replace her as the studio's biggest star. Rita was approaching her 40s, which was considered doomsday for most actresses of that era. They had a lot in common. He arranged an audition for her for an unnamed film, which wasn't good and left him unimpressed. He continued to help her with her career though. *From Here to Eternity* (1953) was in preproduction and Harry Cohen was considering two actresses for the role of Alma, a prostitute. Carol Ohmart and Rosemarie Bowe both prepared extensively for the audition, only to discover that Donna Reed had gotten the role instead. This was done after pushback by the film's director Fred Zinnemann, who wanted someone more experienced rather than the burden of coaching somebody barely starting out as an actress. Carol wasn't afraid of Harry though. She called him and cursed him out, which he -believe it or not- respected rather than resented. They continued to keep in touch until his death on February 27, 1958.



In March 1954, Carol was cast in the Broadway production of *Kismet* as an understudy for Joan Diener's character Lalume. When she wasn't an understudy, she played a Slave Girl. She was insignificant to the production unless Joan was ill, which happened on three occasions. The irony was that Carol seemed to get more publicity than the other cast of *Kismet*, which was unheard of considering her role was unimportant. Peter Coutros penned a story on her in the *Daily News* titled *Beauty vs. Big Town* on April 4, 1954, which detailed her life and ambitions.

Other jobs followed, including demonstrating a 1,600-set television hookup at the Park Sheraton Hotel and Summer Stock in matinees like *Bittersweet* in Boston, Massachusetts and *Troilus and Cressida* at the New York Center. She reportedly appeared in over 400 television series throughout the 1950s, although this was likely exaggerated.

It was during a performance in *Kismet* that she was seen by Ned Marin, who was an agent at Paramount Pictures. He introduced her to Jerry Pickman, who was the Vice President of the studio. They dined together for weeks before he promised her a screen test. It was reported by Earl Wilson on June 21, 1954 that Carol left the production. She was a free agent, and mingled with the most powerful of men. She was set on Paramount Pictures though, so she rehearsed for weeks for the screen test, which was delayed frequently due to changes in management at the studio.

Her screen test took place on January 13, 1955 with Y. Frank Freeman, who was the chairman of the studio. Others who attended were Carmel Myers, Ned Marin, Marc Newman (her agent), and Michael Curtiz, the legendary director of *Casablanca* (1942). After the screen test, she collapsed while leaving the lot and was rushed to Cedars of Lebanon Hospital suffering from appendicitis. It was after awakening from the anesthesia that she was given the news that she would be awarded a contract with the studio. She signed the contract on January 18, 1955 with a starting salary of \$500 per week.

Paramount Picture's experiment of transforming an unknown into a star through publicity began with Carol Ohmart. When asked by James Bacon about this venture, she said "I'm all for it. I'm too impatient to wait for a gradual build-up." It was known as the greatest buildup of an actress since Audrey Hepburn. It even involved input from columnists on ways that she could better her career, with Hedda Hopper saying "I wish they would change her name to Omar", James Bacon labeling her as "a female [Marlon] Brando", and the studio advertising her as "the new Marilyn [Monroe]".

It became evident that Y. Frank Freeman was out of his depth. He - nor anyone in Hollywood- had never embarked on a promotional effort such as this. It wasn't unheard of to publicize a rising star, but to spend \$1, 250,000 on an unknown who hadn't even been casted yet was unheard of. It had been months since he signed Carol, yet he was still searching for a script that suited her. He planned to cast her with Alan Ladd in *The Maverick*, but the film was cancelled during preproduction. In the meantime, he did everything he could to keep her in the spotlight.

He had a restaurant add a menu option called "The Carol Ohmart Luncheon" which was entirely vegan. He had *True Magazine* and *Life* publish a story labeling Carol as "the most beautiful woman in the world." He had her present the annual Ernie Pyre Award. He even appointed her the "Sweetheart of Y-Day" at the YMCA's annual Y-Day and gave her the fictitious title of Miss Sizzle of 1956. The height of everything was when he had a billboard of Carol Ohmart erected with the caption "The New Marilyn" printed in reference to Marilyn Monroe. It was the largest photograph on a billboard in history.

# The Scarlet Hour (1956)

*The Kissoff* and *Too Late My Love* were some of the titles considered for this big-budget film noir. Initially a vehicle for Barbara Stanwyck who left the production because she disliked the script, Y. Frank Freeman cast Carol Ohmart in what would be her debut to audiences as Pauline "Paulie" Nevins. Unbeknownst to her, she was cast alongside two other newcomers, Tom Tryon and Jody Lawrence.



Carol Ohmart and Tom Tryon in  
*The Scarlet Hour* (1956)

The film tells a story of an unsympathetic wife named Pauline Nevins who's having an affair, but won't divorce her husband because he's rich. She and her lover plot a jewel heist so they can wed and live happily ever after. The heist doesn't go according to plan and they find themselves involved in a homicide case. Meanwhile, Pauline suspects that her lover is in love with another woman and begins a slow and painful breakdown. A ballad by Nat King Cole was featured, as well as various scenes filmed at landmarks like the Beverly Hills Hotel and Rodeo Drive.

Although reporters concocted the idea that Michael Curtiz cast Carol in this film and even quoted him as saying "She is destined to become one of Paramount's outstanding stars", this was untrue. In fact, he wasn't happy to be directing someone in such a demanding role who was inexperienced. He acknowledged that she was a good actress, but felt that something of this magnitude required someone with more depth. He knew he was faced with a difficult task. Since the studio allowed him to cast the secondary characters, he chose established character actors to compensate for the possibility that Carol and her co-star Tom Tyron would disappoint.

One of the actors he cast was Elaine Stritch, who was later credited with salvaging the film -if even possible- by providing comedy and talent when portraying Pauline's supportive friend. Elaine had left the Broadway production of *Bus Stop* to do *The Scarlet Hour* (1956), which was a decision she'd later regret. In an interview years later, she said "It was an awful part. I felt like I was visiting the set. I just kept running into places saying hi. The worst." James Gregory was another established actor who left the successful stage production of *In Desperate Hours* to play the husband, which he later said he shouldn't have done. The public had high expectations, but the cast and crew knew better.

### The Casts' Comments

*"I did a picture called The Scarlet Hour with Carol Ohmart, who was hot for a quick minute. It was a laughable exercise on how not to make a movie. At the cast party, we gathered around a table, and Carol was asked to speak. She said 'I'd like to thank God for the opportunity of a lifetime!' Great exit line..." - Elaine Stritch*



Carol Ohmart in *The Scarlet Hour* (1956)



*"I couldn't identify her with any Hollywood type, so I knew that I had to start from scratch. I noticed that Carol looks like a cat and moves like a cat, so I simply dressed her like a cat in a skintight tawny beige dress made of jersey and fur." - Edith Head*

The studio had planned for Carol to see the film on April 12th at the Capital Theater in her hometown where she could do appearances, but she couldn't wait. *The Scarlet Hour* (1956) was scheduled to premiere on March 30th at the Greenwich Theater, so she went incognito. She quickly realized her mistake. She didn't approve of how unlikeable her character came across on screen. She felt that it would give audiences the impression that she could only do villainous roles. Unfortunately, she was right.



Carol Ohmart and Michael Curtiz  
after rehearsals - July 1955

The reviews were subpar considering the high expectations that the film had. It wasn't necessarily a bad film, but audiences who were expecting a masterpiece were disappointed. In an effort to save the lackluster film, a publicity tour began. Carol and Michael appeared at various premieres and talk shows praising *The Scarlet Hour* (1956) as being the masterpiece that it wasn't. The things that it was praised for had nothing to do with the actors, like Edith Head's wardrobe designs and Leith Stevens scoring.





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## The Critics

*"It is a very drab hour and a half, in the company of actors who have not yet established their reputations and are unlikely to achieve them as a result of this movie. The story combines a rather unsavory triangle with a jewel robbery and the director Mr. Curtiz has achieved a certain amount of suspense but little else." - The Times*

*"Carol Ohmart is the sultry boss's wife. She has an amazing physical resemblance, in some angles, to Barbara Stanwyck. Obviously she's Curtiz's Galatea in the acting field. If the material weren't so childish and over-dramatic, she might have made a bull's-eye with this. She soon might be capable of the stuff of a Stanwyck or a Bette Davis." - Herald Express*

*"...a sluggish study of marital discord leading to murder." - Leonard Maltin*

*"The Scarlet Hour (1956) is a routine crime thriller about a nasty dame bent on getting ride of her older husband. A trio of newcomers can't do much with it." - Dick Williams*

*"Miss Ohmart seems to fit her role rather well, but her dialogue and some of the things she is called on to do fail to give her full rein in the acting department." - Lowell E. Redelings*

*"Whether her performance in The Scarlet Hour (1956) will recommend herself to theatergoers and result in studio contracts, we have no way of knowing." - Gilbert Kanour*

*The Scarlet Hour* (1956) never recouped its \$700,000 budget, nor did it leave a dent in the \$1,250,000 spent on transforming Carol Ohmart into a star. She appeared on several episodes of Juke Box Jury hosted by Peter Potter. She was on postcards, bookmarks, and calendars. Alberto Vargas did her portrait. She even made an appearance at the legendary Turnabout Theater where her signature is on display with those of Katherine Hepburn, Lauren Bacall, Betty Grable, and Lana Turner. None of it helped sell tickets though.

Paramount Pictures kept the film in their vault for decades, never doing a re-release. Other than a reel at the University of California, Los Angeles, there was no way to see it until it began to resurface in Australia in the 1970s where it had been more successful. It is viewed more favorably by contemporary critics, who say that it was the last big-budget film noir to use traditional elements of the genre. It's a crowd-pleaser at the Noir City Film Festival, and later had a Blu-ray release by Imprint on September 9, 2022.

Carol Ohmart was offered starring parts in films by other studios, but Y. Frank Freeman refused to loan her for reasons nobody knew. He kept her calm by telling her that he was considering her for roles that she never got. One such role was in *The Birds and the Bees* (1956) where she tested alongside George Goebel, but she wasn't cast. She was then cast as a designer in *The Fullback Wore Satin*, but that film never materialized. She lay dormant for months collecting a salary for doing nothing. Although some people would've considered themselves lucky, Carol yearned to share her talent with the world.

It was shortly after filming of *The Scarlet Hour* (1955) concluded that Carol's agent and discoverer, Ned Marin, introduced her to William Erksine Strange. His newest discovery, William -who would later use the name Wayde Preston- was a mechanic from Laramie, Wyoming who's handsomeness and charisma caught the eye of 20th Century-Fox. The idea was that Carol would teach him acting, but it blossomed into something more. They began dating and were frequently seen by the press at the Luau, one of Hollywood's finest clubs.

They married on November 22, 1956 at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in San Francisco, California, keeping the marriage secret until being relentlessly questioned by a reporter. Merle was furious that she hadn't been invited to the ceremony, but more-so that she felt Wayde was sabotaging her daughter's career. That wasn't that case though. He was angrier than anyone with how the studio was managing his wife's career, later saying "She's a fine actress, but they [Paramount Pictures] threw her a turkey."

*"I've never seen so much talent in one person."* - Yul Brynner





Carol Ohmart and Wayde Preston at  
the Premiere of *The Rose Tattoo* (1955)





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# The Wild Party (1956)

After months of offers, Y. Frank Freeman finally agreed to loan her to another studio. Sydney Harmon of United Artists Corporation cast her in a drama called *The Wild Party* (1956) -previously known as *Step Down to Terror*- alongside Anthony Quinn Jay Robinson, and Kathryn Grant. The latter of the actors would later wed Bing Crosby. This would be her last film while on contract with Paramount Pictures.



Carol Ohmart in *The Wild Party*  
(1956)

In this plot, Carol portrays a wealthy socialite who is held captive by Anthony Quinn until she agrees to an elopement. One of the greatest scenes in the film pitted Carol and Kathryn against one another after being locked in an attack. The hard-bitten blonde yelling at the soft-spoken brunette while trying to escape her imprisonment was outstanding. There are other memorable moments as well, but nothing was considered career making. It wasn't a box-office bomb, but that's only because the budget was so low to begin with.



Carol Ohmart, Anthony Quinn, and Jay Robinson in *The Wild Party* (1956)

On January 10, 1957, Carol Ohmart and Paramount Pictures officially parted ways. The studio wasn't doing well financially, and they didn't want to opt for her annual salary increase per their contract with her. Although she was a free agent and could choose her parts, she made another choice. She wanted to become the stereotypical suburban housewife, and announced her retirement in a letter to Gregg Barrios of the Carol Ohmart Fan Club. She was worried that her marriage would fail like a lot of marriages in Hollywood if she was still working. The newlyweds lived in Malibu, California where Wayne would continue to star in *Colt*.<sup>45</sup>

### The Casts' Comments

*"Carol has been a friend of mine since we acted together in The Wild Party (1956). At a very low point in my own fortunes in the late '50s, she showed herself to be a warm and caring person. One does not forget these things. This was at a time when most of Hollywood had turned its back on me."* - Jay Robinson

Merle wasn't happy. She had ambitions that her daughter would become a star. She herself wanted to be a star, but wasn't. In essence, she lived through her daughter. Why did this phase of Carol Ohmart's career flop? She blamed it on Paramount Pictures casting her in a role that was unsympathetic, hardbitten, and unlikeable. There were critics who blamed the film's mediocre writing and the exaggerated publicity that made audiences expectations unrealistic. The fact that she was approaching her 30s and the Studio System collapsed didn't help either. The most damaging cause was her self-imposed retirement, which slowed the momentum that she had. Although she would return to Hollywood a year later, she would discover that things wouldn't be the same.

Carol's marriage didn't last long., nor did her retirement. It was brief even by Hollywood's standards. Unlike most couples, their separation wasn't contentious. They continued to meet for lunch and casual conversation. They even met on the lot at Warn Bros while Carol was filming an episode of *Hawaiian Eye*. She'd later say "We could've been good friends, but we decided to play house." They'd eventually lose touch after Wayne flew to Italy indefinitely to star in westerns.

*"Carol has helped me a lot. She's given me both acting pointers and home-cooked food."* - Wade Preston

*"I am looking for a man who must be a better person than I in every way, both emotionally and intellectually. If I find such a man and he's an actor, so much the better."* - Carol Ohmart

*The Comeback*

## Born Reckless (1958)

Although not one of her greatest roles by any means, *Born Reckless* (1958) is popular with westerners and die-hard fans of its star Mamie Van Doren. The story of Carol Ohmart got cast if far more interesting than the film itself. She was in the midst of repairing her image when suddenly, her soon-to-be ex-husband goes berserk and leaves the set of *Colt .45*. It was bad enough -and illegal- to prematurely end a contract, but to just disappear afterwards was beyond anything the network had anticipated. Needless to say, the executives at Warner Bros were furious.



The studio's chairman, Jack Warner, telephoned Carol and accused her of knowing Wayne's whereabouts even though they were estranged. He later apologized for his paranoia and -as a token of apology- offered her a supporting role in *Born Reckless* (1958). She didn't wanna do it because she felt that a supporting role was a downgrade, she accepted it for fear that he would get offended or retaliate. Other than a brief quarrel with Mamie Van Doren, it was a good experience that added a third film to her resume.

Carol Ohmart in *Born Reckless*  
(1958)



Carol Ohmart, Mamie Van Doren, and  
Jeff Richards in *Born Reckless* (1958)



There wasn't much of a plot, nor was there anything that touched anyone's emotions. It was a wacky story where Carol portrayed a wealthy socialite, as she did in her last two films. She attempts to steal her Mamie's boyfriend only to be pushed into a swimming pool by her. Although portrayed to be feuding onscreen, Carol and Mamie got along well. After filming concluded, her married officially ended. Carol Ohmart and Wayde Preston divorced on July 18, 1958, maintaining a friendship until going their separate ways. He died on February 6, 1992 in Lovelock, Nevada.

# The House on Haunted Hill (1959)

The press pounced on Carol Ohmart's imminent comeback, labeling it "Carol Ohmart's Comeback" and "Carol Ohmart's Return". Her chance came in the form of a horror flick called *The House on Haunted Hill* (1959) where she was cast by screenwriter Robb White, who said "I liked the whole thing, liked it right from the beginning. I liked Carol Ohmart. I was the one that insisted on having her." Initially, she was supposed to sing the opening theme, but the director William Castle axed it because he felt it distracted from the story where five people spend the night at a couple's 'haunted' mansion to win a prize of \$10,000. Carol and her co-star Vincent Price are the couple, and they have great chemistry onscreen. Her character meets her demise after being pushed into a vat of acid by a skeleton after conspiring to murder her husband and inherit his fortune.

## The Critics

*"Miss Ohmart, a lovely and frankly sexy girl, is ideally cast as Price's wife."* - Bob Thomas

*"Carol Ohmart is very good in an eerie part."* - Jean Walrath

## The Casts' Comments

*"I liked Carol Ohmart. I was the one that insisted on having her."* - Robb White

She was also considered for the role of Hannah Hunter in *The Horse Soldiers* (1959), which starred John Wayne and William Holden. John Ford wanted Carol for that role, but the studio overrode him and cast Constance Towers, who was several years younger. She was later considered for a role in an unnamed film starring Glenn Ford, which also fell through. It was despite losing out on what would be blockbusters, *The House on Haunted Hill* (1959) proved to be even more successful among audiences and is frequently cited as one of the greatest films in history.



Carol Ohmart and William Castle  
between rehearsals - 1958



Carol Ohmart and Vincent  
Price in *The House on Haunted  
Hill* (1959)





5811-64



5811-66



# The Scavengers (1959)

Carol Ohmart was as glamorous as ever in *The Scavengers* (1959).

John Cromwell, the film's director flew Carol and her co-star Vincent Price to the pacific islands to search for a location for filming. They decided on Hong Kong and The Philippines.

In one of Hollywood's last film noirs, Carol portrays an opium addict who abandons her husband in lieu of joining a cartel. You couldn't have written a less likeable character. That being said, she was outstanding in what is perhaps the most realistic interpretation of a junkie in the history of cinema. This is apparent in the scene where she's locked in a basement during her severe withdrawals.



Carol Ohmart in *The Scavengers* (1959)



Carol Ohmart and Vince Edwards in *The Scavengers*  
(1959)



Although not something that would've been mentioned at the Academy Awards, the film did manage to have several re-releases under the title *City of Sin*. It was popular with the late-night crowd for its fast-paced plot and traditional elements of film noir. Aside from some terrible dubbing, bad camera angles, and a soundtrack that didn't fit the theme, *The Scavengers* (1959) is definitely watchable.

*Television*

While her onscreen career was stalling, Carol Ohmart got steady work on television throughout the earlier part of the 1960s. She had recurring roles in *Bat Masterson*, *Johnny Midnight*, *Michael Shayne*, and *77 Sunset Strip*. The latter she got to sing a song entitled Just One of Those Things. Anybody interested in hearing her sing should watch it, as she never got another opportunity to record music.

Although she acted in various genres, she was seen most frequently in westerns, such as *The Life and Legend of Wyatt Earp*, *The Texan*, *Tombstone Territory*, *Shotgun Slade*, *Bronco*, and *Branded*. Her numerous television appearances prompted columnist Mike Connolly to say "Carol Ohmart 'is' television." She was on a roll until she injured her neck and hands in an auto accident, which required weeks of recuperating. There was some good news though, as she inherited a 350-acre ranch in Jackson Hole, Wyoming which she sold to keep up the payments on her house.

Her love life was on fire too. She dated Scott Brady, Hal Holbrook, Pat Rothschild, Greg Bautzer, Bill Bradley, Robert Franklyn, and Chris Warfield. She was also crowned Queen of the Races by the California Sports Car Club in Riverside, California. It was a fitting farewell to a decade that gifted her glory and cursed her with tragedy.

# Wild Youth (1960)

One of her more impressive roles was as Mage in *Wild Youth* (1960), formerly titled *Switchblade* and *Naked Youth*. The part of Madge was a heroine addict who goes on a rampage with her boyfriend while encountering three teenagers. In a plot twist, she shoots her boyfriend to put an end to the murder, kidnapping, and drugs.

Carol Ohmart, who had auditioned in El Paso, Texas, loved the script and rehearsed diligently to perfect the complex part. She visited narcotics wards, alleys, and interviewed addicts. She said of this, "I was determined to get the feel of what a girl in real life would do in that circumstance." It gave audiences insight as to how this brilliant actress took her craft seriously.

Although she loved the script, critics did not. *Box Office* gave a lukewarm review, saying "Carol Ohmart, previously cast in relatively logical melodramas, and Robert Hutton, a one-time young male lead, are the only names of any consequence for the marquee, but they, too, do little to distinguish this particular effort..."

## The Critics

*"... an infant prodigy in her strongest starring role"* - Pressbook



Carol Ohmart and John Goddard in *Wild Youth* (1960)

(Photographed by David K. Patton)

### The Casts' Comments

*"We were staying at a motel in New Mexico during the filming. John [Goddard] and I played a prank on Carol. We placed one of the mannequins in her bathroom and closed the door. When she walked in and saw it, she ran out of her room and said 'There's someone in my room!' She wasn't too happy when we told her it was a joke, but she eventually calmed down. - Steve Rowland*

*"It wasn't her fault that her career floundered. She was a great actress."*  
- John Goddard



Carol Ohmart and John Goddard in *Wild Youth* (1960)

(Photographed by David K. Patton)



# Broadway



Since she wasn't finding success in Hollywood, Carol Ohmart returned to New York City to star as Portia in *Julius Castro* on Broadway co-starring Vic Morrow. It was version Shakespeare's play of a similar name scheduled to premiere in September 1961, but didn't get pre-production. *Banderol* was her next venture in her reintroduction to Broadway. It was written and produced by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Chairman Dore Schary, who cast her in January 1962 in the role of a businessman's glamorous mistress named Katherine Morton.

Carol Ohmart and Ed Begley  
rehearsing for the ill-fated *Banderol* -  
September 1962

*"The play will be quite the challenge to me as an actress. It's a modern version of Shakespeare's Julius Caesar." - Carol Ohmart*

The cast included Ed Begley, Staats Cotsworth, Ann Harding and Betty Field in a story about the behind-the-scenes lives of people in Hollywood. There were so many re-writes during the production that Carol's part was phased out. When asked about her departure, she said "at least I got the free flu shot that they gave the cast." In the end, she emerged as the winner. The production folded before reaching Broadway, and Carol was given four weeks of pay while the rest of the cast was given a week's notice. She quickly rebounded by landing the starring role of Vera Vidor in the stage production of *On an Open Roof* at the Cort Theatre. Rehearsals began on November 26, 1962, but she withdrew in what was described as a mutual agreement with the director and was replaced by Ellen Siccama. It probably wouldn't have done a lot for her anyways, as it closed a day after its January 28, 1963 premiere.

Her trip to New York wasn't entirely wasted though. Her publicist, Curt Weinberg, told her about a film that was being done in Manhattan by Frank Ross Productions. It was about the life of a minister named Norman Vincent Peale. She was auditioned by director Denis Sanders, who hired her on the spot. In his words, "there wasn't even a close second."

# One Man's Way (1963)

It was unlike Carol to do a supporting role, but she was stuck in New York for the remainder of the year. She was happy to be playing a character that was -at the very least- somewhat soft though, and the film had a guaranteed audience of churchgoers and families. In this biographical faith-based film with a respectable budget, she played a reporter named Evelyn Grace alongside Don Murray as Vincent Peale, who -after saving a child's life through faith- quits reporting to become a preacher.



She -in a caricature of Dorothy Kilgallen- does well as the dedicated reporter trying to persuade Vincent to stay with the newspaper, an effort made in vain. Even though it wasn't a large role, she agreed to it since they offered her top billing on the marquee. *One Man's Way* (1963) was a modest success after its premiere in Kansas City, Missouri. It was shown throughout the world in countries like Sweden, Brazil, South Africa, Iran, German, and Spain.

Carol Ohmart and Don Murray in  
*One Man's Way* (1963)

## The Critics

*"Carol Ohmart... is effective in brief appearances as a newspaper woman."* - Edith Lindeman

*"Carol Ohmart plays a girl photographer who tries in vain to teach the young man soon to be a minister, how to steal photographs when working on a crime story for his newspaper. Her deftness wins an appreciative laugh from the audience."* - The Boston Globe

*The most rewarding feature of One Man's Way (1963) is Peale's courtship to Evelyn, which is a tender study of loyalty and devotion."* - The Tidings

## The Critics' Comments

*"We had lots of new faces on the set, so it was good to have a seasoned professional like Carol [Ohmart] on the set. We didn't get too close, but she did everything she was supposed to do. She didn't need any coaching or supervision... a true professional."* - Don Murray

# Spider Baby (1967)

Initially titled *Canibal Orgy*, *Spider Baby* (1967) was filmed in 1964 in 12 days on a budget of \$65,000 before being released on December 8, 1967. As with her character's fate in *The House on Haunted Hill* (1959), she falls into a pit and dies. Jack Hill, the director and writer, cast her because she was somewhat famous, talented, and wouldn't demand a high salary. Furthermore, she had starred in *The House on Haunted Hill* (1959), so she had experience in the horror genre. According to Jack Hill, the fact that she wasn't doing anything and could start immediately was appealing. He gave her the 5-star treatment, even accompanying her to Frederick's of Hollywood to try on negligee for the film.



Carol Ohmart in *Spider Baby* (1967)

Although this film is a cult classic among audiences and was later preserved in the Library of Congress, the impression upon its release was that it was lackluster and cheesy. It played at various drive-in theaters, but was forgotten until the 2000s when it became popular among attendees at San Diego's Comic-Con Convention. Sadly, Carol never got to relish in the success of *Spider Baby* (1967). Jack tried to find her when the cast of the film was getting invites to conventions, even asking co-stars Beverly Washburn, Sid Haig, and Karl Schanzer "Where is Carol? The fans wanna see her." This stands as one of her greatest films, with the iconic "nightgown" scene being one of the numerous highlights of her incredible performance.

### The Casts' Comments

*"We were reading through the script and Carol suddenly says 'Do you think that we could win an Oscar for this?' She would've been great in a picture about a frustrated dominatrix." - Jack Hill*

*"Carol Ohmart was quite an actress. She was capable of much better roles than she ever got. She had a great figure, but she was an excellent dramatic actress. She put every bit of what she had into it. She loved doing Spider Baby." - Karl Schanzer*

*Decline*

As the 1960s progressed, Carol Ohmart's onscreen career went into a downward spiral. Although she was active on television, it was considered a secondary medium who's status hadn't surpassed that of motion pictures. She tested for the role of Ellen Miller in *Lassie*, which would've been her gateway into the a-list had she gotten hired. The following year, she signed a three-picture deal with Paragon-International Pictures where she would star in *Operation M*. Sadly, the company filed for bankruptcy weeks before production was scheduled. She just couldn't catch a break. It was almost uncanny that opportunities would leave her grasp, but they did.



## Caxambu! (1967)

*Caxambu* (1967) was a low-budget production. It was so mediocre that it's hardly worth mentioning, but it helped Carol achieve various milestones in her career. It was her first color film and her first direct-to-television film. It was a rare opportunity for her to portray a role away from type, in this case as a damsel in distress. She played Peggy Garrat, the wife of jeweler Emil Garrat who is held hostage after their airplane crashes in a jungle in the Philippines. As discussed earlier, Carol filmed *The Scavengers* (1959) in the Philippines. Her character was dull, submissive, and loyal, which goes against the dynamic, idiosyncratic, and unsympathetic roles that she was accustomed to doing.

It was a shoestring production no doubt, but it had a respectable cast that included John Ireland and Keith Larson, the latter of whom she appeared with in an episode of *Northwest Passage*. While the film was intended for a theatrical release, it was shelved for years after Paramount Pictures -Carol's former employer- didn't wanna invest in its distribution. It was later shown on television in England on ATV on August 17, 1971 after a distributor thought it'd be good on the barren late-night schedule. Her most memorable scene in the film was when she fended on an alligator with the assistance of her husband. She's still attractive, but it's obvious that the director intended for her to appear dowdy. If anyone wants to see a film starring Carol Ohmart where she has a happy "fairy tale" ending, this is the one. In fact, it's the only one. It was also her only film that she never got to watch after its completion.

Anyone who says that she was an outcast in Hollywood is misinformed. She just didn't want to be found. In a similar way that Kim Novak left Hollywood and settled in Eagle Point, Oregon, Carol returned in Salt Lake City to find herself. She was lost, unsure of her future. Instead of achieving stardom through acting, she tried writing scripts and poetry. It was another avenue where she could earn fame, and it wasn't a craft that practiced age discrimination. Using the pseudonym Carolyn Salt, she wrote a compilation of poems. She had been inducted into the Writers Guild of America (#148070) and completed a draft titled Song of Salt with 51 pages of poetry in 1970. She tried to get it published, but it was a niche subject and there wasn't enough interest. She eventually lost interest in the project herself.

When that failed, she studied metaphysics and later earned a degree from the Church of Devine Consciousness. She would acknowledge that it wasn't a legitimate institution and the degree was worthless. It was then that her mental health began to deteriorate, as so often happens with those who are involve in metaphysics. She -believing that she was indeed a doctor of the craft- changed her name to Dr. K Ohmart.

There were producers, directors, and agents who tried to locate her. Al Adamson wanted her for the role of Carol Bechtal in *Hell's Bloody Devils* (1970), but he couldn't find her. The Players Directory listed her with an agency that didn't exist and included a phone number that was disconnected. It became increasingly clear that she didn't want to be found. Unlike most aging actresses who'd do almost anything for a job, Carol shunned what she felt was a dead-end path. She wanted to use her brain. She wanted to find other avenues to be successful. Unfortunately, she wasn't succeeding. It was with no other skills that she sporadic modeling at fashion shows and art studios. It didn't pay well, but it was enough for Carol to feed herself.

### The Critics

*"She's totally wasted here playing what starts out seeming like an interesting part, which immediately degenerates into a stock '60s woman-in-peril role."* - Vinnie Rattolle

# The Spectre of Edgar Allen Poe (1975)

She had been idle long enough. Carol needed to do something to get things going for her. She contemplated returning to Hollywood. She needed the money, not to mention she was growing restless spending her days in a low-income neighborhood in Salt Lake City.

Fortunately, an opportunity arose that would give Carol Ohmart the boost that she needed. It was in the form of a up-and-coming studio that was looking to make a splash in the industry.



Cintel Productions was founded in Utah by Mohy Quandour, who planned to turn Salt Lake City into another Hollywood. On a budget of \$115,000, he turned a screenplay that he had written years ago into a feature film titled *The Spectre of Edgar Allen Poe* (1974). The quandary Mohy had was that he had to persuade Carol to accept the role. It seemed like fate that he founded a production company blocks from her apartment. He found her contact information via the Screen Actors Guild, and gave her a phone call.

Carol Ohmart in *The Spectre of Edgar Allan Poe* (1975)

(Photographed by Peter Riches)

Although reluctant to do a film where she would be again typecast, she took the role. The filming would be a block away from her apartment, so it would've been odd not to do it. They began filming in May 1972 with Robert Walker, Cesar Romero, and Mary Grover starring as Edgar Allen Poe, Dr. Grimaldi, and Lenore. Carol's role was very complex as a wife who has another personality void of sanity. Her character murders three people, including the title character's love interest. It's not a film for everyone, but it has achieved cult status among the most hardcore of filmgoers.

*The Spectre of Edgar Allen Poe* (1974) was shown in various theaters in London, England before being released domestically on June 6, 1974. It never got the wide-release treatment, but it was shown at drive-in theaters to respectable reception. This inspired Carol to return to acting, so she packed her things and took a bus back to Hollywood. Shortly before leaving, her mother said to her that "You'd think you would've had your fill of Hollywood by now." The mother who once pushed her daughter to be a star became a realist.

### The Casts' Comments

*"She was hilarious. We had a lot of fun on the set."* - Mohy Quandour

*"Both Carol and Robert [Walker] were very eccentric, spiritual people. Carol would talk about some new-age church she attended, while Robert would live in a forest for days on end to be closer to God. Sometimes the most talented people are the strangest."* - Mary Grover

Upon her return to Hollywood, she secured an agent and was immediately cast in four primetime television series, Barnaby Jones, Mannix, The F.B.I, and The Dating Game where she won a vacation to Reno, Nevada. Her episode of Barnaby Jones called 'A Little Glory, A Little Death' featured photographs of her tenure at Paramount Pictures, but a lot of them were removed from the aired footage due to CBS being unable to locate the rights to them. Ironically, she portrayed an aging actress in dire need of money. Her comeback seemed imminent, until bad fortune yet again struck her. While walking to her apartment, she was mugged by a few men. In an attempt to fend them off, they struck her with bats. She was rushed to the emergency room, thankful to have survived such an ordeal. It would take several months to recover, which involved surgery, therapy, medication, and frequent visits to the hospital.

### **The Critics**

*"Ohmart does provide some chills as the emotionless axe murderess."* -  
Don G. Smith



15-27 X 15

*later Years*

As Carol Ohmart recovered from the injuries she sustained, she realized that she couldn't afford to live independently until she healed. Her mother invited her to live with her, so they shared an apartment at 201 E. South Temple Street with Carol paying ample rent using her temporary disability. The harmony didn't last, and Carol wanted to leave as soon as possible. She felt trapped with no way out, far away from the days when she was a budding star with limitless possibilities. That is when she met a man who would change her life for the better.

William Traberth was a veteran, firefighter, Mormon and divorcee with a daughter. He lived in the same apartment building as Carol and her mother. They eloped to Cheyenne, Wyoming in 1978 where they wed at a chapel with no guests, reception, or announcement. Their reason for choosing such an out-of-the-way state to file for marriage was because records aren't made public there. This ensured privacy for both her and her soon-to-be husband. Merle didn't approve of the marriage. An argument ensued, and the newlyweds stormed out of Merle's rent-controlled apartment and never saw her again. She frequently changed her name so her mother couldn't find her, using aliases like Earliere L Melzack and Kari Sonne Omar. She'd frequently relocate whenever a relative tracked her down, something that her husband tolerated but wasn't thrilled about. Merle died less than a decade later, both broke and alone. Carol Ohmart felt that she could finally stop hiding.

# Rediscovery

Carol Ohmart had been missing for years. It wasn't so much that she was missing though. She just didn't wanna be found. She had again changed her name. It was now Kari Omar Sonne Traberth. Kari was short for Carol while Omar was short for Ohmart. She was still married to William, who was then a part-time clerk at a hardware store. They both had pensions, so money wasn't an issue. Carol would spend her days gardening, painting and writing at their apartment in Sequim, Washington. She joined a self-help group that met weekly and discussed spirituality, meditation, and creation. It was essentially less-dangerous version of metaphysics that had plagued her mental health years ago.

If it hadn't been for the research, dedication, and determination of Gregg Barrios, Carol Ohmart would not have been found. Gregg, who was a columnist at the *Los Angeles Times* spent months searching for her. He had ran the Carol Ohmart Fan Club in the 1950s, but had forgotten about her after her career faded. He had a renewed interest in her after seeing *Wild Youth* (1960) on television, so he contacted her family to see if he could interview her. He got a copy of her birth certificate from a cousin of hers, which he presented to the Screen Actors Guild who reached out to her. Gregg and Carol then had several meetings where she discussed her career, woes, and whereabouts. The interview was published on January 8, 1989 in the *Los Angeles Times* to immense fanfare.

She continued to keep in touch with Gregg Barrios through letters. She even sent him a leatherbound book on spiritual awakening. Carol had an active social life, but there were only a few people from her past who were still allowed access to her. Anne Francis - her co-star on *Versital Varieties*- was one of them as was the aforementioned Claudia Atkinson. Claudia acted as a point of contact for anyone in Hollywood who wanted to contact Carol. This was arranged because several columnist, producers, and fans wanted her for various projects. She was even offered a guest role on a soap opera.



Carol Ohmart in Seattle, Washington  
- 1988

(Photographed by Geoff Manasse)

Unfortunately, none of it appealed to her as she was holding out for something more substantial. She wasn't desperate, nor would she accept parts that were demeaning. She also made it clear that if somebody gave out her contact information or her real name, she would disown them. Thankfully, she never had to do that. She remained happy and healthy throughout the 1990s. Although she had been a smoker for decades, she compensated for it with a pescetarian diet and fresh-squeezed juice. She forgave her mother for the abuse that she suffered, but she was clear that she wouldn't forget about it.

# Death

As she did as a child, Carol and her husband never settled down. They lived in Sequim, Washington, Florence, Oregon, and Exburg, Idaho. It was because of her husband's pension that they had the freedom to live anywhere, and Carol was never satisfied. She had found happiness in marriage, but not contentment. In 1999, the couple tried purchasing a house in Hawaii as Carol feared that Armageddon was approaching as we entered a new millennium. It was her understanding that an isolated place like Hawaii was safe, and her husband felt that it'd be a great destination to retire. Their plans stalled though as prices were high and offers fell through. They ultimately decided on Fort Collins, Colorado. They found an apartment in the mountains at 121 Dartmouth Trail, which would be Carol's last place of residence.

On January 1, 2002, Carol Ohmart suffered a severe aneurysm. She was rushed to Poudre Valley Hospital where she was pronounced dead that afternoon. In accordance with her wishes, she was cremated and her ashes were scattered over Loveland Lake on December 21, 2002. William -distraught- purchased a trailer in Fruitland Park, Florida, where he lived until his death on February 21, 2005.

One of the saddest things about her death was that there was no obituary published, nor was there an announcement. Everyone who knew of Carol Ohmart had the impression that she was alive, but they didn't know her whereabouts. The way in which Carol's death was discovered is an interesting one. It was June 2015, and I had just completed the second year of my undergraduate studies. I had tried finding her in 2009 with no success, so I thought I'd try again. I posted footage on YouTube of her greatest onscreen performances that including a note

I logged onto Ancestry, as they acquired millions of new documents since I began searching for her. Since I didn't know what she changed her name to, I decided to search by birth date. I scrolled through records of hundreds of people who were born on June 3, 1927 in Salt Lake City, Utah until I found a death record that read "Kari Omar Traberth, Died on January 1, 2002 in Fort Collins, Colorado". My search was over, but I didn't get the result that I had hoped for. I was sad that she died, but sadder that she had been deceased for 13 years unbeknownst to anyone.

The first person I told was Gregg Barrios, whose email I found online. He was living in San Antonio, Texas. He replied the following day and told me that he'd try to publish an obituary for her. Unfortunately, I never heard from him again. The news outlets he had connections with probably weren't interested in publishing an obituary on someone who died 13 years ago. I kept the news of her death to myself until deciding to post it on Wikipedia. The news spread like wildfire with fans mourning her via magazines, homemade videos, and blogs. Carol Ohmart would've been touched by the love of those who paid homage to her talent, grace, and charm. She was truly a one-of-a-kind woman.



*I've never, never reviled Hollywood. I love the people, the talents, the joy of making movies much too much. - Carol Ohmart*

# Acknowledgements

There are a lot of people who helped contribute to this story to commemorate such a talented actress. Carol Ohmart's co-stars in *Wild Youth* (1960), John Goddard and Steve Rowland, told great anecdotes about her. They both remember her fondly. Autumn Russell of *The Scarlet Hour* (1955) and Kathryn Grant of *The Wild Party* (1956) remembered her fondly. Jack Hill, Quinn Redeker, and Beverly Washburn of *Spider Baby* (1967) were instrumental sources of information, as were Mary Grover and Mohy Quandor of *The Spectre of Edgar Allen Poe* (1974)

Carol Ohmart didn't have any children, but she has cousins who were able to help tell this story. One of them was Lane Earl, who's the daughter of Claudia Atkinson. Claudia was the only relative who had direct contact with Carol Ohmart after she became reclusive, so Lane had firsthand accounts of their conversations and meetings. Her friend Gregg Barrios, who profiled her decades ago, inspired me to write about her. Barrios passed away on August 17, 2021 at the age of 80.



C. Robert Rotter, who owns Glamour Girls of the Silver Screen and co-authored Pageantry with me, has always been a great source of information whether about Carol Ohmart or other actresses of the 1950s. He provided a lot of photographs too. Brian Walker, who owns Brian's Drive-In Theater was also helpful. Jon Whitehead, the owner of rarefilmm, was kind enough to add *Caxambu!* (1967) and *The Spectre of Edgar Allen Poe* (1974) -two rare films- to his website.

Laura Wagner, Robert King, and Carol Peterson of Classic Images were of great help too with information about Carol Ohmart from previous issues of their publication. Anthony Calbert provided various one-of-a-kind photographs while Kevin Johnson sold me the manuscript of Carol Ohmart's *Song of Salt* poetry for the discounted price of \$82.69 at Crown Books, Inc.





# Filmography

## Films

*School of Naval Justice: Training* (1952) - Student

*The Scarlet Hour* (1956) - Pauline 'Paulie' Nevins

*The Wild Party* (1956) - Erica London

*Born Reckless* (1958) - Liz

*The House on Haunted Hill* (1959) - Annabelle Loren

*The Scavengers* (1959) - Marion Allison

*Wild Youth* (1960) - Madge

*One Man's Way* (1964) - Evelyn Grace

*Spider Baby* (1967) - Emily

*Caxambu!* (1967) - Peggy Garrat

*The Spectre of Edgar Allen Poe* (1974) - Lisa Grimaldi

## Stage

*Theater Guild of the Air*

*The Henry Aldrich Show*

*Troilus and Cressida* - Helen of Troy

New York City Center

*Kismet* - Slave

Ziegfeld Theatre

## Radio

*Theater Guild of the Air*

- ???

*The Henry Aldrich Show*

- ???

*Aunt Jenny's Real Life Stories*

- ???

*Juke Box Jury*

- October 8, 1955 (Self)

## Television

### *Versatile Varieties*

- September 16, 1949
- November 30, 1949
- December 31, 1949
- April 7, 1950
- May 19, 1950
- June 2, 1950

### *The Plainclothesman*

- January 28, 1951

### *Hollywood Screen Test*

- *Easy Street* - January 30, 1951

### *Your Prize Story*

- *Something Blue* - May 14, 1952

### *Light's Out*

- *Mary, Mary Quite Contrary* - March 27, 1950
- *The Dispossessed* - March 19, 1951

### *Colgate Comedy Hour*

- August 21, 1955 w/Michael Curtiz (Self)

### *Juke Box Jury*

- May 4, 1956 (Self)

### *Girl Talk*

- November 27, 1963 (Self)

### *The Dating Game*

- ??? (Self)

*Versatile Varieties*

- September 16, 1949
- November 30, 1949
- December 31, 1949
- April 7, 1950
- May 19, 1950
- June 2, 1950

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- *Something Blue* - May 14, 1952

*Light's Out*

- *Mary, Mary Quite Contrary* - March 27, 1950
- *The Dispossessed* - March 19, 1951

*Colgate Comedy Hour*

- August 21, 1955 w/Michael Curtiz (Self)

*Juke Box Jury*

- May 4, 1956 (Self)

*The Dating Game*

- ??? (Self)

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# Author

Samuel Clemens is a multitalented journalist, businessperson, and teacher. He began writing as a hobby during his undergraduate studies as an editor of *Glamour Girls of the Silver Screen*. Since then he has penned articles for *Classic Images*, *Western Clippings*, *The Galileo Observer*, *NG4*, and others. He's interviewed such stars as Jackie Loughery, Myrna Hansen, Joyce Meadows, Danica D'Hondt, Beverly Adams, Jan Watson, Eileen O'Neill, Pat Quinn, Vikki Dougan, Barbara Wilson, Yvonne Lime, Beverly Washburn, Bonnie Jean Wilbur, Stephen Radosh, John Goddard, Arthur Dong, and John Santos.

In addition to *Carol O'Keefe: The Story of Hollywood's Greatest Actress*, he has authored *Pat: A Biography of Hollywood's Blonde Starlet*, *The Triumph and Tragedy of Suzanne Alexander*, *Reiko Sato*, and *Pageantry*. His secret to good journalism is to be truthful, and to not be influenced by payment, readership, or critics. It helps to write about people and subjects that you like too. His current projects in the queue include interviews with Lara Lindsay and Eric Martin, the latter being a vocalist who released best-selling albums with Capital Records.

In addition to being bilingual, he has a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts. Other hobbies of his include video games, animals, volunteering at church, and traveling. He hopes to go to Tokyo, Japan someday, as well as visit the entire United States of America and its various landmarks.





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CAROL O'MART



P4092-64



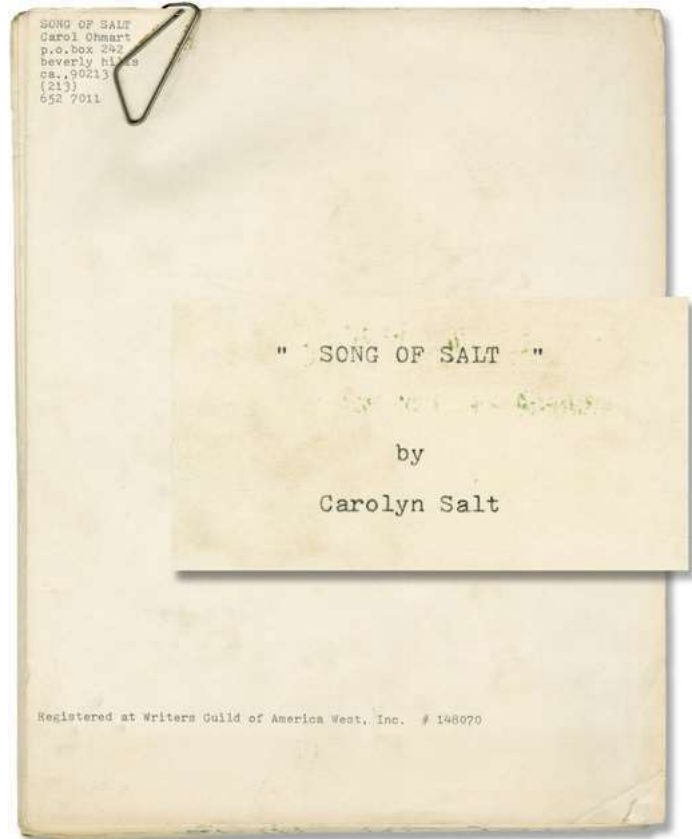
4092-22

CAROL OHMART

*Song of Salt*

# Carolyn Salt

The following 51 pages are copies of Carol Ohmart's unpublished poetry under the pseudonym Carolyn Salt. The title of the manuscript *Song of Salt* was recently discovered at an auction hosted by Royal Books Inc. I purchased the manuscript and added it to this publication so that anyone can read the once-lost works of this talented woman. It was registered with the Writers Guild of America, West with the I.D #148070.



The titles of her poetry include ONE, KISS, CHRIST COME, and LOVE'S SUNSET. There are also several love letters included that Carol wrote but never sent. According to the dealer, these poems are based on events that actually occurred during her lifetime. There is even a poem regarding her mother, even though she doesn't specifically mention her name. I transcribed it to match the form of the manuscript itself, including aligning it to the left of each page. I added a watermark as well. I hope that everyone enjoys reading Carol Ohmart's poetry.

SONG OF SALT  
Carol Ohmart  
P.O. Box 242  
Beverly Hills  
CA., 90213  
(213)  
652 7011

“ Song of Salt ”

by

Carolyn Salt



Registered at Writers Guild of America West, Inc. #148070

This book is dedicated to my  
beloved man of salt of my  
earth.

Let me not oh Lord  
be mistress to Lot.  
But let me be  
me,  
and lead me on  
wings tho' silent  
of love loosed.

In Thy Name's sake  
;et his name  
and mine  
be sacredly secretly  
open to one and all  
as one name:

LOVE

And so let it be.



.. Song of Salt....



“ ONE ”

What can I say?

What can I do?

Let us not pray:

I love you,

I love you.

Speak not too soon.

What is true.

First let me give of me to you

That you may fill and know.

Let us breathe our breath of life

One into the other

And as our breath intermingles

And flows

Within, without, within

Let us step up the friction of life-strife

To First of Love: Creative Love.



Let the burnings of our separateness  
Drive us in thrashings apart  
That we may gain force  
For our creative-crash-blending-coming  
Together:  
One.  
Fire. Alive. One-Two-Three  
Four! We have won.

Yes, I love you.  
And I hear your love in a thousand voices  
True and clear as the sound of the first sunbeam  
Striking earth.

Yes.  
I am beloved,  
Beloved.



“ KISS ”

How can I tell you?  
Would you believe me?  
Of my years, seven, of purification?  
Of my years of peaceful celibacy, serene?  
Knowing of you  
Yet not how you would appear  
Or when. Or even if.  
Of my lips not kissed?

Then you kissed me.  
I kissed you.  
We cherished in kisses.

And lightning electrified me  
Bright-white to new light  
And life. And warmth.



How can I tell you?  
That it is you that is  
To break the seal.

I am afraid.  
Afraid you won't.  
Afraid you will.

I wait.  
And Love.  
Serene.  
In joy.  
Waiting.

Cherishing  
Kissing  
You.



How can I tell you?  
That it is you that is  
To break the seal.

I am afraid.  
Afraid you won't.  
Afraid you will.

I wait.  
And Love.  
Serene.  
In joy.  
Waiting.

Cherishing  
Kissing  
You.



“ CHRIST COME ”

Christ, Come take my hand  
I'm so lonely and confused  
And I Know You'll understand.

You see I met my perfect one  
On a starry moonbeamed night  
We laughed and talked and had some fun  
Together, we were so all right.

We kissed and held each other warm  
Sheltering each and all from harm.  
We dreamed our life to active bliss  
And sealed each promise kiss on kiss.

We planned each night to come together,  
And braved all winds and stormy weather.

Then, on Friday, just like You,  
His work called him away.  
On sweet Christ, I'm terribly blue.



Deathlike grips now siege my heart:  
 He's phoned once  
 Since we've been apart.

Oh Christ, my perfect one is lost  
 And I'm bewildered and afraid.  
 Don't know if he's dead  
 Or on big parade  
 Or out on a town?  
 Has work cost  
 Him loss of memory  
 Of me?  
 Good Christ, Come now and set me free  
 From my confusions and my misery

Tell me. Tell me: Is he dead?  
 Kick these demons out of my head/  
 Tell me. Tell me: Is he mine?  
 Or someone new to make sunshine?  
 Tell me. Tell me: Is it true?  
 That I love him? And he loved me?  
 Oh Christ, Come now and set me free/

Tell me, tell me, will he phone?  
 Am I doomed to be alone?



Tell me, tell me, set me free.  
Tell me that he loves me.

Speak to me.  
Speak to me.  
SOMEBODY SPEAK TO ME!  
Christ-----

Somebody love.  
Let somebody love me.

Oh take my hand.  
And understand.  
I'm so lonely  
And afraid.

CHRIST-----  
I love him.  
help.

"Loose him." Did you say?  
Oh Christ, Don't let him get away!  
I love him.



"Loose him. Set him free.  
To love through all eternity.  
For binding brings the pain to heart,  
And holding demands a ripping apart.  
Loose him. Set him free.  
Let him come to you. As you did with Me.  
You've heard My Voice,  
You'll hear Love's too.  
Now let Me go to my other sheep.  
Loose love, child, and in patience sleep.

"Then your midnight blues will stream away,  
Bright sunrise blue will spring a new day.  
Loose love's wings on silent joy.  
Hold not with greed as childish toy.  
Let him go, and he'll come to you.  
I give it to you,  
And true.  
Let me go that I may come again.  
Let go unto God and set Love free.  
Let go of all, that it may come unto thee."

Amen.



Oh Christ, Come now and ease my heart  
My love phoned once since we've been apart.  
We loved till dawn in sweet caress,  
Giving one life, our glorious "Yes."

Oh Christ, Come now and ease my heart:  
So I'll know  
Love is never apart.

#



“ WEDNESDAY ”

All day has been Wednesday.  
 Yes, all day, tho' papers tell me tis Sunday"  
 It has been Wednesday.  
 I have seen my beloved on Wednesdays.  
 On Wednesdays, only.  
 Sadly.

But alive!  
 Now it shall be Wednesday  
 Again. This week.  
 And yea! Both Wednesday and Thursday!  
 What shall I do?  
 Shall I breathe?  
 Surrounded shall he be  
     with pretending maids  
     seducing, for they have nothing  
     better to do.  
 What shall I do? I too  
 Shall do nothing. But love.



And awake not my love his love  
Till love be ready to be awakened.

I yearn. In my bed nightly  
I search for him  
And he is not there.  
Yet he is. For his presence more  
Than fancied shadow. And smell  
Of him clings me close till dawn  
When I sleep. Awakening quickly:  
For he is not there. But love  
Of him wraps me round  
And breathes me deep  
Into day.



What say I?  
What can I say? But stay  
My tongue till fodder burns high  
To his heart, as honey of my love  
Reaches fire, to his meat of love  
And calls me, beckons me, holds me  
To him, For him.  
Then, I breathe again.

But what? What?  
 Can I titter?  
 As ignorant maids aglow?  
 No. For I have mind. Howbeit only  
 For him. Can I sing? No.  
 For he knows not I'm a psalmist.  
 Neither knows he me==  
 For I stand agape, stumbling blocks  
 In his path to me. (If he rather?\_  
 Spouting dribbles. Hearing not.  
 For I stand in flood.  
 Yet I stand.  
 Hand alone.  
 Reaching out, dearly,  
 To him. Which he takes.  
 And I freeze. Deaf. Blind. Dumb.  
 Only for him.  
 Listening desperately:  
 Hearing naught  
 And speaking draught of nemesis-nonsense  
 For my tongue is not my own  
 But his  
 And he has given me no meat-seed  
 With which I may-----



May?

It is June.

No.

Then where am I?

April. May I kiss your hand?

As Wednesday-Wednesday only

Breeds alone to

Wednesday-Thursday.

What is a Friday?

Is there a Sat Sunday?

And Monday exists not save a trinkle

Of rain spent and dribbling

Drop. And my pen of ready-writer

Halts. Cripples. Lame.

It knows only his name.

And Tuesday never was.



"LETTER NUMBER ONE: Never Sent"

Beloved One:

Yes. 'Tis true. For over ten weeks now.  
I did not bring it on of myself. Neither can I dismiss it, deny it, fly from it. I love you.

While I was running my wheels over curbs  
and writing innumerable songs strivings to excite  
the painful friction to creative fire, I was in  
love with you. Now I can simply declare: I love  
you.

It is said the Arrow of Cupid hits with accuracy and speed.  
I have read much of these things tho' never before experienced it.  
Now I know tis true. It is also said when the Arrow  
"attacks" and "strikes-home" that it is for a  
Divine Purpose: and poets through out the ages  
have prayed for us to follow where Love does call.  
Neither can I deny this--for it is said I'm a poet.



And Cupid's aspect Eros did ignite me with  
 his fire and lightning as you did witness in your  
 arms. It was unusually powerful as celibacy has  
 been a serenely good part of my life, especially  
 during the years of my purifications. (True celibacy heightens  
 sexual force, in order to transform  
 and transmute to transfiguration, but never to deny.)  
 In your arms great floods of force and lightning,  
 electrical, magnetic, crashed through and through  
 me, and as it were, broke my inner seal-----I  
 await your breaking the outer. Tho' you be deeply within me now as  
 I write in good passion--yet, wondering if I shall have courage and  
 wisdom to  
 give this to you.

(Please hold these words sacred, if for no other reason  
 than they are to me.)

I shall give you the key to the front door  
 of the building where I love: it is locked  
 about 10 p.m. and there is no buzzer system. My apart-  
 ment is on the right, five steps up, on the first  
 floor. When you knock I shall be awaiting you, as  
 I have for almost seven years, for I knew of you  
 long ago: I am my father's child. He is from a  
 Jewish family of all men, from Persia. My grand-



And Cupid's aspect Eros did ignite me with  
his fire and lightning as you did witness in your  
arms. It was unusually powerful as celibacy has  
been a serenely good part of my purifications. (True celi-  
bacy heightens sexual force, in order to transform  
and transmute to transfiguration, but never to deny.)  
In your arms great floods of force and lightning,  
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me, as it were, broke my inner seal-----I  
await your breaking the outer. Tho' you be deeply  
within me now as I write in good passion--yet,  
wondering if I shall have courage and wisdom to give this to you.

(Please hold these words sacred, if for no  
other reason than they are to me.)

I shall give you the key to the front door  
of the building where I live: it is locked about  
10 p.m. and there is no buzzer system. My apart-  
ment is on the right, five steps up, on the first  
floor. When you knock I shall be awaiting you, as  
I have for almost seven years, for I knew of you  
long ago: I am my father's child. He is from a  
Jewish family of all men, from Persia. My grand-



father married a beautiful musician from Ireland:  
and my father married a beautiful nurse, also Irish.  
It is said that Jewish-Irish-Persians are highly  
intuitive. Oh yes, I knew of you. If not your  
exact appearance. I have waiting long for you.

You asked what I did the last ten years.  
Well, they were Real and Beautiful. I was taught  
and did learn Truth. Or perhaps I should say the  
Way and Light and Centre of It. As a person of  
Purpose I readily see and respect your Purpose, tho'  
I know not what it is. (We have talked so little.)  
I am to help you. What do you want me to be for you?  
I can only be, what you want me to be.

You have little time for "courting", neither  
have you worldly aptitude for it. It is not that  
important. As you've observed, I'm not that  
delighted with noisy restaurants with their vibra-  
tions in turmoil and frenzy. I ask only truth and  
honesty. And I shall likewise give the same.

My apartment is small and simple and spartan  
but you may find joy there, with serenity in action,  
and fun, and mischief with tickling on to joyous  
laughter. You are welcome. Any time, any hour:  
No conditions. Except for myself, nobody has a key.  
And I usually have nuts, cheese, grains, bread and



honey, but that's not about all. Perhaps I should get a little wine.

I am vulnerable to God. I am vulnerable to you. It was by the Holy One I was led to you. What you may wish or need to know of me, Ask: I will tell you only the truth. I live as totally as I can by the Light of the Divine Fire--Divine Spark  
--I AM THAT I AM--Hoa Atah Ani--Shekinah-----

I open my arms, my self unto you in love and welcome. Come. Here is the key.

Come.

#



aaaaawwwww nutzzzzzzzz.....

"LETTER NUMBER TWO, Never Sent"

My Love: I am writing this on wings of swiftness, tho' not unsteady, for I must attend to things material. It is morning and I shall be gone all day while looking all day to seeing you again, this night? And perhaps? Being with you?

For ten weeks now rolling my car over sidewalks, staggering into confusions, rebelling in vain to keep the status quo, running away from you only to full circle right (and right it is) back into your arms. Being terrified at the lightning and fire that flowed through me when we did kiss, for my love I have allowed no man for many years. I too have been a person of Purpose, and so I can and do recognize yours, And respect it. A few months ago I would have run from you, successfully, but you see my purpose, (or rather a purpose to the Ultimate Unconditioned purpose) was completed just before I met you. When my "cool" returned



I saw that if it is true that I love you, I must release my so-called feminine privileges, and help you to attain your Purpose (s).

Here is the key to the front door of the building where I live, in simplicity, for where you said: "Love is very expensive.", and I agree with you, there is one that is even more so-- Truth, with It's emanations of honesty, integrity, etc. The building is locked tight about 10 p.m. This key to Apt.#5 I will retain, but all other conditions I release, freely, loosing them to the God That Is, for it is only by The One that this action within--without has, and is taking place. It is not of myself m(tho' since I have cherished it dearly), that the Divine Arrow of Love did pierce and penetrate me the night of a full moon, February 6. (Not too oddly 6 is the number of your name.) Do not, again, ask me "Why?" This question has no answer, as It has no defining. By giving you this key (and if you do not want it, throw it away, for none other shall receive it.) I, in a way give you the outer key to myself, but the inner key I hold waiting to open My Door when you knock. I have waited long.



That first night I doubted, understandably,  
but then that Sabbath (Saturday which I strive to  
honor) I did leave my house, only to see you: and  
when you asked me to lunch my head began to flood  
in swirls, and at lunch you lifted your usual veil  
from your eyes, and your Inner Self did greet me  
and I saw You and the Pure Real Gold from You.

In trying to fight my windmills I wrote songs  
and my senses of humor, fun and cheer could and  
did return with blessed joy winking at me.

I know not where all this is to lead, neither  
dare I dream, for it was The Finger that pointed  
and I but followed. I do and have put this into  
the Hand of God, as He Will. And nevertheless.

I can say no more.

Not now.

Come.



“ LOVE-TIME ”

‘Tis pity  
As you did say  
With smile and intellect  
Pedanting from your face:

“Love is too expensive.  
I am too busy. I have too much  
Responsibilities--duties.  
Cuties are cheaper.  
Love is too dear.  
Come not near  
Till I have harvest--  
My field, and foliage  
Cleared from my life  
And I have time for you.

“Love. Love costs attention,  
Toll calls, time consuming  
Energies. I cannot sleep



In blissful arms  
 Of love. I must run.  
 I cannot rest  
 In sweet caress.  
 I must nourish my responsibilities  
 And heave my heavy load  
 Shoulder to shoulder  
 Back to arm  
 To hand. I have no time  
 To land my knee  
 To glories of love.

"No. No. I must sow while it is spring  
 And summer brings in  
 My harvest of fall fruits.  
 Then I must reap what I have sown.  
 No. I cannot love. No, hello.

"Love must wait. Love is too dear.  
 Love: Wait until I am clear.  
 And free for you. Love is  
 Too expensive. I have-----"

You have,  
 Not I love.



"I cannot afford love  
at this time. Wait,  
a little longer,  
only."

You cannot buy loves nourishing  
sunbeams, nor the rains  
of loves tears waiting  
joys abating. Love  
sells not  
loves peace:  
still-dark-deep  
roots feeding milks--honeys  
that the inner may glorify  
the outer to promised  
field fulfilled.



"Wait. Love. Wait.  
It is my harvest time.  
My fruits are beautiful.  
Look and see. Love, Look!"

I see. Eat now.  
Your fruits. Bite in.  
Now, and see yourself.

"My beautiful fruits are empty  
 ----hollow. There is no  
 sweet juices. There is pulp,  
 strings, roots, dry and clutching,  
 tangled in clay. And all my leaves  
 too soon have withered. I have----"

No harvest, save what you can  
 put to the all-consuming flame.  
 You have denied your time  
 for Love. Love that is fire,  
 nourishing, life-breathing,  
 consuming not.  
 Love giving Love  
 that all may live  
 to perfect harvest,  
 replenishing itself with seed  
 of its own kind:  
 Love-kind.  
 Fare well little man.

Love moves on.

You ask for Sun of Love  
 ----in your midnight.



You now must wait  
Through your darkness.  
And perhaps. Perhaps,  
Love will come again.  
Beware: Love comes quickly.  
And waits on no unbending man.

But lo, the Lord of Love calls  
And gives one more hour of loving grace.

What do you now little man?

"Ah, thank you, thank you.  
I shall run and  
clear my field  
and-----"



Goodbye little man.  
'Tis pity.

#

“ LOVE’S SUNSET ”

My heart trembles...

Tis Shabbath,

Candles aflame,

It is your name

My heart breathes

Daring my lips to

echo

my shame.

Adoring

God.

Seeing only

your face.

No! The face of God I see not

Save in the face of all.

In Breath of God I loved all.

Alone. Yet, sometimes lonely, alone.

Loving all, I had no one

in particular.

Secluded,

I embraced all.



But,  
Sometimes,  
My arms were cold,  
Mortal.

In illness, prone, moons passing,  
Longing, praying, ay, for death:  
And it was given me.  
But one spark  
Lay awake  
    in my spent ashes.  
And Almighty Breathed  
And I awoke  
Alive,  
But innocent as Phoenix:  
Knowing all--knowing nothing.



And from my high point God  
Did weight my wings  
And I did fallingly descend  
Alone, to face valley and field anew.

When on ankles, new, trembling, quickening,  
To strengthening courage to new life:  
I saw you.

And the gold of your soul winked at me.  
And Gods Love did flood through  
And through me, springing, inflaming,  
    warmth and light  
    to my thighs and heart. And song  
    of new and joy and bliss  
    came singing winging alive  
    from kiss on kiss.

And bending before you  
Poetry swelled in throbbing rhythms  
Aliving my blood and tree of nerves  
Till poems burst forth: Fruits--  
Fathered by you. Fired by The Father.  
And Mighty Fan did banner  
    till my one-point bloomed  
    and diamonds facets fruited  
    to flames, alight, alive:  
My new heavens to new earths  
Is come.

And my fruits and herbs  
    bearing seed weep  
    for the male of my soul



winks at his bride  
within you.

For you have drawn tight  
the veil. And no wink  
of opening fire nor light  
is returned

The dove will wait  
holding green his twig:  
for what God has sent forth  
returns not unto Him  
empty nor void.

But, if the green must wait  
till it be brown and dry  
----it shall wait:  
for fire again

Shall burst up and forth  
Devouring swiftly the dead  
Leaping Gaily  
-----beautifully  
Harmony enrapturing  
For fresh souls delight.



And while smoke shrouds  
I remember:  
Tho' I cannot, must not, of myself  
Re-call. I do not forget I did see:  
As Gods Love poured  
To you through me  
I did see  
In one mighty flash  
And flame of gold:  
The face of God  
from within your funny face.  
And I knew Love  
Divine.  
And for a passing moment  
Its name was You.



My heart thunders...  
My serpent rises lightning forked  
and staff of spine  
spins to new directions.

While flame upon my breath  
dances-sings praises  
unto God.

Alone.

And calling sweet blessings unto you.  
You, that knew not Love was passing.  
Yet, your golden soul winked,  
but your hand reached not  
neither a word  
To hold me where I would to stay eternally.

Fare-thee-well sweet face, good face.

ONE face.



"Understanding is Child  
of Wisdom and Love-Divine."

" SHICKSA? "

Your reb called me shicksa  
For my Christian mother dandled me  
On her knee to raise my body strong.  
Yet spirit-Hebrew from my father  
Your reb did try deny  
Dishonoring my father  
Honoring not my mother  
And thus did spue me  
from his breath  
with "shicksa!"



When my body grew tall and strong  
Readied, and did temple the spirit of my father,  
And his fathers, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob,

You saw my star. And rightly the name  
 You spoke was David.  
 But then an elbowing companion spoke:  
 "Are you a Jew?"  
 I am Jew. Or so my father did declare.  
 And laughing scoring stones issued  
 from your pointing companions mouth spitting:  
 "But your mother is not."  
 For I knew  
I AM  
 Is Father of us all.

Call me not shicksa.

Life giving spirit be male.  
 While form forming is female.  
 Honor both dear reb.  
 Were it not for body  
     Where would spirit tabernacle?  
 My body came by Christ.  
 (Is not Christos Greek for Hebrew Messiah?)  
 My spirit came by I AM  
I AM THAT I AM.  
     Would you dishonor male in THAT?



In IT? In THOUGH?  
Are you?

I have embraced the Jews  
And in love returning call me Jew too.

Not you?

Oh reb, you deny not only my father.  
but my love, my loving man, who  
confused, new in love turned to you,  
returning not to me for you  
had termed me shicksa  
ripping from my father spirit:  
loving giving his only child-seed  
into a good healthy woman  
for it was not easy for this  
my Jewish father to find a good woman  
to mother his child, for he was old  
and weary running struggling staggering  
home to home, land to land,  
fleeing stoneing torrents: "Jew! Jew!"

With eyes blue, skin fair, red hair,  
He met a virtuous woman  
with whom he could seed his kin, and love.



He told her parents he was Quaker.  
And carried her far away  
in proper civil marriage.  
And soon her carriage heavied  
with conceiving him as me.

But soon again "Jew!" torments  
Swiftly stole his coin, and heart  
weary, crying, wailing, praying,  
he sent me in my mothers womb  
back to her people. Where I  
could be born and reared  
in safety. And he died.

But before his final breaths  
he called me to stand strong  
before him and call him father.  
He questioned me with stern face,  
examined my body for signs of race,  
and probed my mind for determined faith,  
and asked examples of works of my spirit.  
Then in silence sat he.



Suddenly wine he ordered  
And commanded me to drink.  
And when first glass was downed  
he poured us both one more.  
He spoke:  
"Do never dishonor your mother,  
or her people, or her church."

I won't father.

"You have grown to be your father's daughter  
tho' by your mother you were raised.  
A Christian she calls you, and perhaps  
you are, I know not. But as your father,  
and you your father's daughter, I know  
your blood, your race, your calling,  
your very breath.  
I tell you now  
what you know not:  
And profess it not  
till you are totally ready,  
for it is seed joyous,  
not easy.  
The call of your blood, your chosen blood,  
will call to you. And you will hear.  
You are Jew."



Yes Father. I am.

Reb! Do not take from me the man I love

With "shicksa!"

Would you have me break the Fifth Command?

By only half? If so. Which half?

Give back my love to me with Love

That I may obey the One.

Rabbi, I am

Your sister.



" NOW "

Alone I wing not  
 For one wing spreads to fact, two.  
 And one is right  
     while one is left.  
 Shadows from love fall behind  
 As I fly alone with Love.

Alone: All one  
 As my right is one  
     with my left.



Bleed not oh heart!  
 Yet, I see one round coin,  
 a minute lake of love spent  
 a circle completed in blood-red.

Breathe in oh Breath!  
 Exile the past  
 To make future last

Let breath go forth  
In the ever eternal  
Now,  
And Love.  
Alone,  
    if need be.  
The greater need  
    is always filled.

Amen.



"BODY AND FORM: His"

The tips of his ears  
curl, as does a white rose  
pushing to blossom.  
Black wisps dance  
whiskering his lobe  
for he got a haircut  
and I'm sorry  
(tho' he seemed pleased)  
for his locks curled  
and kissed his ear  
as I long for so long  
to do. But now  
the kissing curl is gone  
along with the swaying  
pointing wave that thrilled  
to his shoulders strong  
tho' weary.



His belly  
pushes out perhaps  
too much. But soft  
it would be to lay my head  
and kiss, caressing  
the all of him,  
as his fingers  
strong and square  
they are, as silvered chisel,  
did stroke my brow  
and play in my curls  
colored as natures wheat.  
I praise his belly.  
For it would be my pillow  
to glories as yet known.  
Could? Perchance?  
the glories of his black locks  
be brown?  
lower down?  
Oh! tight chaff does burn.  
Burn on. I wait.

His thighs I'm sure are golden  
for they swell sure and confident  
in his sagging pants. And he



walks side to side  
like a ship leeward  
but always strong to course.

And the smell of him!  
Clean as green.  
I inhaled him once in sweat  
and it was as if all nature  
had gifted me with fragrance  
of nature's secret works.  
I splashed on more cologne  
secretly ashamed,  
that I had not  
the pure sweet scent of him.



His feet like tugboats  
Bringing in to harbour  
All the good Law will allow.  
And socks like white banners  
flowing rippling round  
his ankles, warming,  
assuring the strong  
in the base of him.

There is no fat in his jaw

jutting forth as a Carmel tree  
 against all winds. And smile?  
 Can a festival of lights be defined?

He has a tooth  
 which sticks out front  
 darkly, as a sentinel  
 receiving all blacks  
 from his tobaccos  
 and warning  
 in fierceness:  
 hurt not the others.  
 I love that one black tooth.



A girl passed  
 In rounds and rounds  
 Of soft and pink and nipples.  
 He is a man.  
 And quite a man.  
 I pray he shall be gentle.  
 If-----  
 Shall he? Will he? Wants he?  
 Me?  
 I have breathed my Yes.  
 But has he heard?

Does he want to?  
Oh my God.  
I want his body.  
Deep. Deep. Deep.  
Within me. Lord!  
Take it away. Or  
Give me what I pray.

His arms. His arms.  
Lord! Let me get  
through  
this  
night.  
Give me  
what I need  
to face a new day.

His face.  
His face.



#

“ HIS VOICE ”

As a child I would take  
a hose. And finger hold  
strong over the nozzle.  
Then when force built  
more than could be contained:  
great spurts would leap  
and cover all  
demanding  
domain.



As a child high in cold mountains  
I would shiver in pleasurable thrills  
as thunder did talk with me.  
And I listening, heard  
tho' I knew not what  
it really said.

Time had passed.  
He looked at me under street lights.  
His car parked.  
He spoke not.  
Silence swelled.

He with tenderness took my wrists:  
With violence ripped me to his arms:  
Gentleness held me close.  
And I scarce did breathe  
For poundings of his heart  
    had stopped his breath  
    and he held me close,  
    not tight,  
    his heart tapping out  
    harmonies his head  
    refused  
    to comprehend.  
And his breath squeezed up  
to lips. And I did hear:  
"I love you."

We kissed. Soft  
    as the moons first call  
    to oceans tides.



His voice was silent.  
(As was mine.)  
He drove me home.

I see him:  
Wednesdays, Thursdays.  
His skin is very dry  
His voice  
forced  
and  
juiceless  
now.

#







Carol Ohmart at The Thalian's Marti Gras Gala  
- May 1960 ->



Carol Ohmart - 1972 ->





